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STEERING AND POLICY COMMITTEE

October 4, 2011

Honorable Lisa P. Jackson  
Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Jackson:

I am writing to request a meeting with the appropriate representatives from the federal, state, and Chicago offices of the Environmental Protection Agency to discuss the issue of permitting for the coal-burning Badger steamship, which operates between Wisconsin and Michigan and dumps up to 509 tons of coal ash into Lake Michigan annually.

In an October 1, 2011 Chicago Tribune article entitled "*On Lake Michigan, a Coal-burning Steamship Gets a Pass*" ([http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2011-10-01/news/ct-met-lake-michigan-coal-ferry-20111001\\_1\\_coal-ash-ss-badger-ship-discharges](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2011-10-01/news/ct-met-lake-michigan-coal-ferry-20111001_1_coal-ash-ss-badger-ship-discharges)), it is reported that the Badger dumps close to four tons of coal ash, or toxic waste including arsenic, lead, mercury, and other toxins, into Lake Michigan. The story also noted that during its peak season, the Badger dumps more coal ash into the lake than all of the other 125 ships navigating Lake Michigan combined.

The Tribune article reports that in 2008, the U.S. EPA gave the owners of the Badger up to four years to find a solution to this problem, and the owners assured the EPA that they would comply. However, as that deadline approaches, it is reported that the owners are now seeking an exemption from the federal Clean Water Act to delay addressing this issue until at least 2017.

As the Ranking Member on the House Energy and Power Subcommittee, every day I am fighting to protect and enforce our nation's environmental protection laws. So it is very disturbing to read about a violation of these very same laws taking place in my own backyard. In order to fully understand exactly what the agency is doing in regards to addressing this issue I am requesting a briefing to discuss this matter with the responsible EPA representatives.

Please contact my Senior Policy Advisor, John Marshall, at (202)225-4372 or [JohnM@mail.house.gov](mailto:JohnM@mail.house.gov) to schedule this meeting as soon as possible in my Washington, DC office.

Thank you for your timely response and I look forward to hearing back from you on this very important meeting.

Sincerely,

Bobby L. Rush  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Energy and Power

[www.house.gov/rush](http://www.house.gov/rush)